

REMARKS

I. Objections to Disclosure

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to a numbering informality in the disclosure. Appropriate correction has been made.

II. Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-9 under Section 112, second paragraph for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter applicant regards as the invention. With respect to each particular rejection in this portion of the Office Action, Applicant has made appropriate correction.

III. Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 103

a. Bonora A in view of Bonora B

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-9 as being unpatentable over Bonora A in view of Bonora B. Claims 3 and 7 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant respectfully submits that, as amended, Claims 1-2, 4-6, and 8-9 are patentable over this cited combination.

In this regard, independent Claim 1 recites in a more detailed fashion the structural elements of the claimed apparatus for loading and unloading wafers. This includes an intake filtering system installed in the base of the apparatus for preventing wafer contamination, and spring grommets located at the ends of the lead screws for absorbing pitch error. Support for these claim elements may be found in the specification. See, e.g., Figure 4; Detailed Description of Preferred Embodiment, p. 4,

line 24 to p. 5, line 3; p. 6, lines 8-13.

This combination of features is not present in the apparatuses disclosed in Bonora A or B, either alone or in combination. For example, with particular regard to the feature of grommets installed at the ends of the lead screws to absorb pitch error, neither reference discloses this feature. Moreover, neither Bonora reference discloses the feature of an intake system having intake pipes installed at openings of protective covers located on port plate supporters, as now claimed in independent Claim 1. Accordingly, the combination of the two Bonora reference would not yield an apparatus having the combination of features in independent Claim 1, as amended.

For the same reasons that Applicant has asserted the patentability of independent Claim 1 over the cited combination, Applicant asserts that dependent Claims 2, 4-6, and 8-9 also distinguish over the cited art.

b. Bonora B in view of Bonora A

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-9 as being unpatentable over Bonora B in view of Bonora A. As noted above, Claims 3 and 7 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.


For the same reasons presented in the proceeding section, Applicant respectfully submits that, as amended, Claims 1-2, 4-6, and 8-9 are patentable over this cited combination.

In conclusion, Applicant respectfully submits that this Amendment, including the amendments to the Claims and in view of the Remarks offered in conjunction therewith, are fully responsive to all aspects of the objections and rejections tendered by the Examiner in the Office Action. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-9 are now in condition for

allowance. Applicant therefore earnestly solicits the issuance of a Notice of Allowance with respect to these claims.

If there are any fees incurred by this Amendment Letter, please deduct them from our Deposit Account No. 18-0002.

Respectfully submitted,



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